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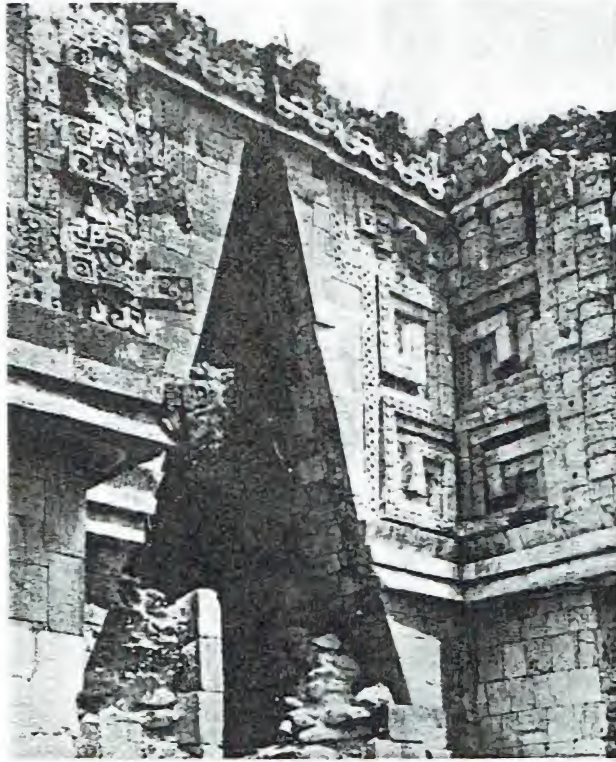
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Photograph by Rose Dawn

*The Archway to the House of the Governors
(Yucatan)*

DO IT YOURSELF

Mayan Lesson Number 159

THE GREATEST LIFE PURPOSE

MORE THOUGHTFUL

MORE PURPOSEFUL

MORE CONSTRUCTIVE

MORE KINDLY

MORE OPEN-MINDED

MORE REVERENT

MEDITATION

Beloved Centurion:

As each lesson in this series comes to your hand, I ask you to keep in mind at all times the title and meaning of the series, DO IT YOURSELF, because it is devoted to teaching you how to do for yourself the many things that will bring you the life more abundant. It discusses with you the things which others can not do for you, - you must do them yourself.

That is why at times the lesson may sound as though your instructor was being a little stern in admonishing you to do this, or not to do that, but really, this is not the case. You are beloved by your Order, your instructor, and your Leader, and the rules laid down by which you may become a more contented, useful person are prepared in love and with a heartfelt desire to help you. We know from the thousands of letters which we receive continuously that lives are being turned into a thing of beauty, where before all was despair; so we feel that we are proceeding wisely in the matter of our instructions for you.

I would like to suggest you read very carefully and contemplate on the meaning of the word "abundance". Most people think of abundance only in the terms of possessions, an abundance of clothing, an abundance of food, an abundance of modern conveniences which make life easy. Well, it is true, all that is abundance, but that is not the meaning of the word in the sense we discuss it in this lesson.

The abundant life is the life you create for yourself in the way you use your life, and the happiness which can be yours as a result. When you understand the meaning of serving others and making others happy, you have learned the secret of the abundant life. It is the most soul-satisfying state of being that you will ever encounter.

I know of nothing which thrills me more than to hear someone say - perhaps in my private office, or perhaps over the long distance phone - "Just talking with you has changed my whole outlook. I feel so much better. I am not downhearted and sad as I was before I talked to you. Thank you so much for your help." Statements such as this bring real joy to me.

We of the Mayan Order consider it a privilege to be able to carry on the work which brings forth these wonderful comments from our members, because we earnestly feel the most we can get out of life is life's discipline for ourselves and the uses we can make of it for others who need it. We should really count that part of our life lost which we do not spend in helping others, in living with God.

The shaping of our own life is our own work. No one can do it for us. It can be a thing of beauty or it can be something we are not proud of, all depending on ourselves and what we make of it. It can be a thing of beauty and joy forever. It isn't the great things which we accomplish in life that are important. Life is not made up of great sacrifices or duties, but of little things, in which

smiles, kindnesses, and small services, given habitually, are what brings new life to those who are sadly in need of our help and comfort.

Someone has said this and it is very true, "Be such a man and live such a life that if every man were such as you and every life a life like yours, this earth would be God's Paradise." You, Beloved Companion, can do your part in making life a paradise, not only for yourself, but for those who come in contact with you.

There will be times when you will not feel like putting forth the effort to live more abundantly, but if you will go that extra mile you will find that you grow spiritually, mentally and physically in so doing; and, somehow, somehow, even beyond this you will gain more from life, though you may not realize at this moment in just what way you will benefit.

In order to fill our hearts with reverence before we begin this lesson, let us say the words of the following prayer and know that it will be answered:

P R A Y E R

Strengthen Thou my arm, Heavenly Father, as I reach out to thee in an effort to live the more abundant life. Amen.

LESSON NUMBER FIVE

LIVE THE MORE ABUNDANT LIFE

THE GREATEST LIFE PURPOSE

J E S U S, the Lord of Life Himself, once declared His purpose thus, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." This should be our most authoritative measure of life, for the mission of Jesus was to put it at its best for each and all.

Notice the open road form of the expression. He does not make the idea static and inactive by declaring His purpose to be merely that we might have life abundantly. How abundantly? What is abundantly? Why accept whatever abundantly may mean today as the full and final measure?

Neither does He say most abundantly, for though farther out that too would be static, as well as out of reach from where we stand. No, He leaves the way open for the forward step, the further challenge. He leaves us the call of the open road, the farther distance, the constant progress. A little farther to go, a little higher to climb, a little better to do - that is our amazing incentive

to keep life from going stale. Jesus does not lay on us anything beyond our power, but neither does He set any limits.

So He measures the perfect pace. He gives us an elastic, adaptable program that applies to the need and condition of anyone anywhere - that they may have life ever more abundantly. Whatever is your present position, you can press on. Whatever is your stage of advancement, you can keep trying. Whatever you have done thus far, you can do better. Whatever you have learned, there is another lesson. All this is bound up in that word "more".

If your life is more abundant today than yesterday you know you are going on. If you can see that it has gained in meaning since last year you know the days have not been spent in vain. Is your outlook broader and sharper? Do you succeed better in carrying out the possibilities you see and the opportunities that present themselves? Have you a richer life to radiate around you? If so, you know you are getting on. You are satisfying the idea of progress suggested in that word "more", and if you are doing well you can do still better.

But all that is in the past tense. What about the future one? We call the past tense perfect because it is something done and closed, even though it is not always really completed or really perfect. It has been said that every verb form except the past tense is really infinite because it suggests something going on into infinity

If you can see all those signs of progress up to now that is well, thus far; but if they are contained in the past tense, it is not. The value of things past can be sealed and conserved only by considering them infinitive - still to go on, and on, and on. They furnish you a pattern for still greater progress in the future. Now let us ask ourselves further what we really mean when we speak of the more abundant life.

MORE THOUGHTFUL

T H E more abundant life is the more thoughtful life. We are distinguished from other animated forms chiefly by greater brain capacity and what that capacity has enabled us to accomplish. We have not been given this capacity nor been enabled to use it without a reason. The law of degeneration shows that if we have any power to use, and that if it is not used, it tends to atrophy and disappear.

Yet we are told that we do not by any means use all the brain capacity we have, probably not more than a third to a half of it. We have already noted how much the world has lost in ideas that failed and ideas that could not fail because they were never tried. To that vast loss we must add the incalculable amount that might have been and never was because the human race with all its brain capacity never thought of it.

We have men with great knowledge, but we could have more. We have men

with power to reason, but they could put it to greater and better use. We have men of wisdom, but the sum of their wisdom could be more.

What has that to do with you? Just this: It means that in your sphere, and in relation to what you have to do, and considering the situation in which you seem called upon to live your life, the more abundant life consists partly in being more thoughtful, in not overlooking so much, in not missing so many things.

"You need to rub some muscle grease on that mop", said a man to a boy who was working for him. It took the boy awhile to see what the man meant because, as they said in that community, he did not have his thinking cap on. You see, he not only needed to rub some muscle grease on the mop, but also to mix a little extract of gray matter in his work. Most of us do.

We are always hearing people excusing their mistakes, even very serious ones, by saying "I didn't think." We are forever hearing people excused for failures and mistakes with the claim, "He didn't mean any harm; he was only thoughtless." Even Jesus on the cross had to ask Heaven to be merciful to those who crucified Him with the reminder that they did not know what they were doing. The sad chapters of life are written because someone did not live enough of the abundant life even to be thoughtful.

Right here is a large area of failure and disorder, and few of us can say that some of it is not in our own lives. Sad things happen and failures are made because we do not think. We cannot always think of the right thing, but we can strive in that direction, and keep narrowing the area of disorder.

The thoughtful life is not only safer; but it is also more balanced and satisfying. Those who live it have brighter eyes, steadier hands, and clearer minds. They discover more values, conceive more good ideas, and find better roads. You have a good mind. Inform it, and use it. It will lead you to a richer life; - it will also make your life of more value to others and to the world.

MORE PURPOSEFUL

T H E more abundant life is naturally the more purposeful life. This does not mean that we can see the end clearly from the beginning. No traveler can do that. But he can have heard, and read, and thought about the destination for which he is setting out. He can have looked at maps and consulted guidebooks till he has at least some idea how long the journey is, where the road runs, and what the trip may involve. The better he thus clears his purpose the more successful the project is likely to be.

One cannot always see the end of even a short journey from the start or be sure what the details of his arrival may be, but the surer purpose he forms the more likely he is to find the place and make his going there worthwhile. No haphazard journey is very promising. If it turns out well it is likely to be by chance.

It is so in the journey up the years. You cannot see your final destination; but you can take the word of experienced people, learn what is available about it, and have faith that a goal well chosen and sought with a good purpose will be all you expected and maybe more.

Being purposeful in the lesser concerns of life helps one along toward the larger aims because it helps to determine whether he is headed in the right direction. Every little gained is that much farther on the way.

Now that you are older and know more about life, do you not sometimes think with wonder how your mother accomplished so much, maintaining the house, keeping the household affairs going, caring for the children, managing the family economy, helping your father, and lending a hand to neighbors in need of it? It is a safe assumption that here is how she did it. She had a plan, and that is another way of saying that she was purposeful. She had each day's work laid out in her mind, and she marshalled her forces so as to get it done. Day after day of this wrote the wonderful book of family history that unfolds in your memory.

These memories will help you to realize the distinction between being purposeful and merely being forceful. The important values of life are not taken by force, and violence is likely to defeat itself. Being purposeful is having a plan, an aim, and working systematically to achieve it.

Take pattern from your mother's homekeeping and you will see what it means to live purposefully. Her work led to more abundant living, well-planned and carried out; and so will yours. Remember, though, that being purposeful includes keeping faith in the little things.

You can go along on a hit or miss basis if you will, but you will not go far. It is practically effortless, and those who do it are the sluggards of the world. They may manage after a fashion, but they do not put the human race in their debt. They slow down the march of mankind, for the world has to stop and wait for them. They have no part in any goal, for they never sought one.

The abundant life calls for purposeful living, for that is dynamic living. Choose your goals with care, and keep on the roads that will take you to them. Have a larger pattern and a farther goal, but remember that they are reached by smaller patterns and nearer goals. Between each sunrise and sunset lies a part of your journey. See that it adds up to the necessary distance.

MORE CONSTRUCTIVE

A N O T H E R thing that makes more abundant living is more constructive living. That means to let each day and each thing done make a difference for the better. Do not make today another promissory note to the future. Make it a payment on your obligation to life, bringing you that much nearer to solvency. Be a builder.

To leave the world worse than you found it would be a blot on your name and a sorrow to your soul. To leave it just like you found it would be to have lived in vain. To leave it nearer to its hope of happiness and peace would be to have justified your coming into it. We must all give Destiny some excuse for coming here.

You may object that you are not able to build up an empire of trade, or power, or resources, or fame, or anything of the kind. If any such thing is your mission, and you can accomplish it, well and good and all power to you; but if you are like most of us you will have to settle for something else.

Please note that we said something else, but not something less. That something else may not be something less. It may be something more. In fact it is. We can really say here with complete assurance that you can actually achieve something better than any of those things. Here is how. Set out wisely and constructively to have enough life in yourself to radiate life to some of God's all too troubled and heavily burdened children. That is simple and close at hand, but it is the essence of greatness.

The life of the human race is not easy. Its march up the years is hard. Its sorrows are many and its burdens heavy. It has worked against frustration and defeat. Some of its troubles are of its own making, but they are troubles just the same. Many of its victims of circumstance, cruelty and ignorance, are poor people and little children.

You will see need today; relieve it.
 You will come on troubled hearts; cheer them.
 You will find people wavering on the edge of despair; encourage them.
 You will find people groping in the dark; be a light for them.
 You will find burden bearers; show them how to lay down their burdens and take up a song. . .

When you retire tonight have the memory of some happiness you have given to lull you to sleep. If you can remember that somewhere a heart is lighter, a care easier, a mind more at peace because of you, you may know that you have done that much constructive living, and your heart will be telling you how much more abundant it is.

There are rulers, princes, diplomats, judges, rich men and public favorites who would gladly trade their positions of eminence for the peace in your heart. Your influence will still be going on when the currents of time have swept theirs away. No one can do that for you, but you can do it yourself.

MORE KINDLY

A N O T H E R element that would add to the more abundant life is more kindness. There is not nearly enough simple, human kindness in our world, and it sometimes appears that the pressures of present day conditions are tending to

make it less and less.

Never lull yourself into thinking this is not a serious problem. If you will observe carefully and think it through you will surely find a great need at this point, and you may agree that it is one of the chief barriers to the dream of human happiness.

A reasonable chance for normal human happiness and the conditions that make it possible is a fundamental human right. The Constitution of the United States lists the pursuit of happiness in its preamble as an inalienable human right. Surely then, helping to make that pursuit more successful adds to the enrichment of the lives of both those who give it, and those who receive it.

Unhappiness is not inert. It is very active. It increases, deepens, sharpens, and spreads. It buds, blossoms, and bears the fruit of desperation, destruction, undesirable conditions, and low-grade living. Study any group of criminals and any classification of crimes, and you will discover that most of our criminality starts from sources no one thinks serious, and that in many cases that cause is plain unhappiness.

There are two general causes of unhappiness - wrong and neglect. Some people live under conditions that make them feel they do not have a chance. Some live among people who are not congenial or in surroundings that are depressing. Some live in material need. Some are not well and in fear of not becoming so. Some are pushed about by others who have more strength than wisdom. These conditions and others like them breed unhappiness that more kindness would help to eliminate.

There are others who are made unhappy by a simpler cause and one which could be more easily removed. They are unhappy simply because people forget or do not take time to be kind. This tragic multitude goes on becoming more and more despondent, and what wonder? A serious feature of their situation is that their unhappiness keeps them from being kind too. Then still others neglect to be kind to them because their unhappiness becomes resentful. The thing is cumulative.

Whether you consider yourself unhappy or not you can make a start on this entire problem right now, and it will help you as well as others. Start living a kindly life. Be generous with smiles, courtesies, and words of gratitude and appreciation. Be thoughtful, helpful and considerate. Others will find the way easier, and so will you. Try to do these things so well that others will catch the idea. It might even become the fashion. As you do to others at least some of them will do to you. It will cost you nothing, and will reward you well.

"For life is a mirror to king or slave,
It's just what you are, and do.
Then give to the world the best you have,
And the best will come back to you."

MORE OPEN-MINDED

I F you are going to try to keep traveling toward more abundant living you must keep the road open, and the road runs straight through your mind. Since it is largely one of right thinking, viewpoint and attitudes, the open road is an open mind. If we have set up road blocks or allowed them to be set up, they must be removed.

These road blocks are of several kinds, and most of us at some time have one or more of the varieties in the way. For instance, there are our prejudices, our aversion to change, our tendency to feel that we alone are right, and the simple fact that a lazy mind prefers the easy way of not bothering about anything that can be neglected.

Progress necessitates change, readaptation, readjustment. The only exceptions would be people who had already attained all wisdom and knowledge, and had their lives going in all the details of the best possible way; and they do not exist. It was said of Enoch of old that he was such a good man that God took him to heaven bodily. But that did not come about of itself. He had to achieve that excellence. He walked with God. To do that one has to change, go forward, keep developing, and that requires an open mind.

By whom has all the progress been made through the centuries? It has not been done by people who were content merely to hold the fort, but by people who had open minds and kept going forward. Think of all the advancement made by Science up to this day. Not one of the people who contributed to it had a closed mind. A man might as well not go into the laboratory at all unless he goes in an attitude receptive to truth as he may find it. Think of all the good, and wise, and great of time. They would never have gone beyond mediocrity if they had not had open minds. Think of any progress of any kind you have made in your lifetime, and you will see that it was something you approached without prejudice.

A closed mind does to one's mental processes what a frame would do built around a budding flower - turn it into a mis-shapen thing. A road block will force you off the highway into side roads and detours. You will discover no truth if you begin by prescribing what it has to be like when you find it. What you will bring home from your ill-advised search will only be something you already believe or know.

Open your mind and let in the light as you open your lungs and let in the air. If we discovered nothing new and different, nothing would change. If we never accepted truth we might as well not have discovered it.

Do not take a train with no headlight on the engine, nor a ship without a rudder. Be certain there is some means of revealing the path of progress ahead and that you are brave enough to follow it.

MORE REVERENT

A T the end of this list we place growing reverence as an element of the more abundant life, not because it is least, but because it is fundamental. It is placed last for emphasis and with the thought that this position may cause it to be more certainly remembered. The spirit of reverence will strengthen every one of the other qualities we have mentioned and make it mean more. Any abundant living attained without reverence will be false, deceptive, and temporary.

Reverence is a far-reaching word, but its most important and necessary phase is, of course, solemn respect for God. He stands at the beginning not only of creation but of every human experience and relationship, even of life itself. An Old Testament wise man said that the fear (respectful or loving recognition) of God is the beginning of wisdom. There is nowhere else to begin the abundant life or any part of it except in a spirit of honor to the Divine. God may be a mystery to you, but you can recognize Him. You may feel that you know little about Him, but if you are ever to know any more you will have to make a primary place for Him in your thinking and living. As experience grows that place of respect will become a place of love.

The natural outgrowth of reverence for God will be reverence for other things God has created and blessed. All this may be considered sacred, and indeed should be; but some things are especially so because they stand in peculiarly close relation to the Divine. Among them are the Holy Book which more than any other has been inspired to reveal the Father and His promises to and dealings with His children, - ourselves. Another is the Church with its message and practices, many of which have come down from the Apostles themselves. Another is anything that promotes religious faith and the Kingdom of Heaven. Another is the human soul and its interest, nurture, and care. Another is any one of God's special gifts to us, such as country, home, loved ones, and means of life. Others are Nature and its works, Providence and its rulings, and a fellow human being.

Doctor Albert Schweitzer has coined a phrase which should always stand high in any list of reverences, perhaps next to reverence for God. It is "reverence for life". That high viewpoint and attitude toward the miracle of life in all its forms is probably the only thing that could explain the marvelous life of such a man. Deal reverently with all life, and you will find that it will bless your way.

The more refined your soul becomes the more things it will revere, and the more things it reveres the better person you will be. The list is endless - truth, learning, beauty, goodness, helpfulness, by way of beginning. Add to the list from your own thought and experience. Doing so will help prepare you for every good thing you can ever know.

You have passed through the Archway and will continue on ever upward. Please keep this thought in mind, and as you do so, now repeat the words of the

following Meditation:

MEDITATION

I have gazed upon the outlines of the more abundant
life. The vision takes on completeness as I approach.
I proceed to make it my pattern for living.

May God Bless You in Your Study to Perfect
Your Life,

YOUR CLASS INSTRUCTOR.



The next lesson in this series has to do with overcoming the obstacles
which you encounter in life, and I consider it of utmost importance to you.
Be ready.